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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DEPARTMENT BULLETIN No. 1360

Washington, D. C. ▼ June, 1926

MARKET CLASSES AND GRADES OF LIVESTOCK

By

C. E. GIBBONS, Business Specialist, Marketing Livestock, Meats, and Wool
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

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NEED FOR STANDARDIZATION ON LIVESTOCK MARKETS

Ever since the establishment of central livestock markets there has been considerable confusion, much disappointment, and untold loss and waste, because of the difficulty in describing market transactions in such a way that the producer on the farm or out on the range, the slaughterer at some distant packing center, the trader on another market, and the student in his classroom, all would understand exactly what transpired on the market. Practically every livestock market has its own standards, its individual preferences, and its own methods of doing business. All these matters are thoroughly understood by those who are on the market daily, but

[1] The schedule appearing in this bulletin is not the work of any individual but is the result of the best thought of the entire Marketing Livestock, Meats, and Wool Division, combined with many helpful criticisms received from specialists outside the Government service and members of the livestock trade.

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when an attempt is made to describe market transactions to someone at a distance, or to one who is unfamiliar with practices prevailing at that particular market, difficulties are encountered.

Much of this confusion arises from the fact that a certain set of names and trade terms are rather generally used to describe livestock at all markets. The meaning of these names and terms, however, varies between markets, between individuals on the same market, and frequently with the same individual on the same market at different times and different seasons of the year.

As a result of this variety of definitions of terms and shifting of standards it has frequently happened that producers having shipped livestock to a certain market in the belief that prices were highest there have been sorely disappointed to find that prices actually were higher at some other market which they might have patronized. Livestock has frequently been forwarded from one market to another because the shippers believed that the second market was higher than the first, when subsequent events showed that just the opposite was the case. In most instances of this sort the difficulty has been due not to any intention to deceive on the part of anyone, but merely to the fact that the same or similar terms carried a different meaning on different markets and when used by different individuals.

In view of such conditions it would seem highly desirable to have a complete set of terms and names with which to describe the various groups into which livestock is sorted at central markets and, for such names, definite and fixed definitions which can be understood and interpreted in the same way by producers, shippers, commission men, traders, packer buyers, or anyone else connected with the industry. Such an arrangement must facilitate livestock marketing and tend to eliminate disappointment, loss, and waste.

Few livestock producers now depend upon a single market. The wise producer keeps as well posted as possible on several markets and ships to the one which promises the highest net return for the kind of stock he has to sell. Livestock is therefore a much more liquid commodity now than it was a few years ago, and livestock marketing has come to be a much more technical and scientific procedure. Live meat animals are shipped across the continent. Surpluses or deficiencies at any point are quickly advertised over a wide area and as a result the stream of marketable stock flows back and forth, always seeking the lowest level of supplies and the highest level of prices. This tends toward an equilibrium and a balancing of supplies with demand. The maximum development of this stabilizing action is largely dependent on prompt transmission of accurate and understandable market news, and this in turn is predicated on a standard set of market class, grade, and trade terms with standard definitions for each.

Standardization is a mark of progress. It is a prerequisite to rapid, economic, and satisfactory exchange of commodities between individuals, groups of individuals, and nations. It faciltates commerce in many ways and broadens and tends to stabilize the market for any commodity to which it is applied.

Standardization of product is largely a production matter. Standardization of method of marketing, of packaging, and of market practice are chiefly matters of commerce. Before commodities can move

freely through commerce and with a minimum of loss, trade language must be standardized. Buyers and sellers must use the same terms and attach the same meaning to those terms if best results are to be obtained.

Although almost from the beginning of centralized livestock marketing, market papers, and members of the trade used certain terms to designate the various groups into which meat animals were sorted for purposes of trade, there was no serious effort, so far as is known, to organize, harmonize, and define these terms in such a way as to make them nationally applicable and generally recognized and understood until early in the present century when the task was undertaken by the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Illinois under the leadership of Prof. Herbert W. Mumford, assisted by Prof. Louis D. Hall and others. The results of investigations made by these men were published in a series of bulletins dealing with both livestock and dressed meats.

Just as the schedules of market classes and grades used by Professor Mumford and his associates were based on those already in use by the trade, so the schedule appearing in this bulletin makes free use of those set forth by Professor Mumford but with material elaboration and modification to care for the refinements of present-day livestock marketing.

This bulletin constitutes an effort to formulate, set down in logical order, and define a set of class and grade terms for livestock which can be used on any livestock market and the meaning of which can be easily understood by anyone interested in the matter.

It is hoped that the schedule of market classes and grades and the definitions of terms which follow will fit trade requirements so closely that they may eventually be generally accepted as standards.

DEFINITION OF CLASSIFYING AND GRADING

Classifying and grading constitute a process whereby animals are divided and subdivided into smaller and smaller groups, each division being based on some more or less fundamental principle or consideration. As the groups increase in number they decrease in size and the individual units which form a given group show constantly increased similarity in all essential respects.

The term "classification" is frequently applied in a broad sense to the general process of dividing meat animals into classes, subclasses, and the various use, age, and weight selections as well as grades. Strictly speaking, however, classifying is limited to dividing animals into the major subdivisions known as classes. Grading, on the other hand, as conducted on livestock markets constitutes the last process of sorting and results in much smaller but much more uniform groups than classes.

Ultimately and actually, however, grading consists in determining the degree of excellence of individual animals. The grade of a pen or load of livestock is simply an average of the grades of the individuals which make up the lot.

PURPOSE OF CLASSIFYING AND GRADING

As offered at public stockyards, live meat animals represent a wide range in degree of all essential characteristics. Some possess

excellent conformation, whereas others are ill-shaped and rough; some are fat and others are emaciated; some are very young and others old; some heavy and others light; and finally, some represent the highest degree of quality, whereas others are extremely deficient in quality.

The immediate purpose of classifying and grading livestock on a commercial scale is, by eliminating extremes, so to arrange the animals that the individuals making up a group will present great uniformity and that each animal will make a near approach to an ideal which has been established for that group. The ultimate object is to make possible an accurate determination of values and intelligible description or reporting of market transactions.

Obviously, where wide variations exist in essential characteristics it is impossible either to determine accurately the true value of the animals or to describe them satisfactorily to one not able to make a personal inspection. To illustrate, "steers $7 to $10," means practically nothing, whereas "choice, mediumweight, yearling, slaughter steers, $10 to $10.50," conveys very definite and specific information to anyone who understands the exact meaning of the terms "choice," "mediumweight," "yearling," and "slaughter."

STANDARD CLASSES AND GRADES

A standard schedule of market classes and grades of livestock must be suited to the needs of producers, traders, and slaughterers of livestock and to consumers of meat and animal products. It must take into account both the kinds of animals produced and the kinds demanded, and must be based largely on fundamental considerations and characteristics. It must be workable, definite, specific, and reasonably permanent. It is hoped and believed that the schedule of market classes and grades appearing in this bulletin and the definitions of the terms which make up the schedule, meet most of these requirements and can therefore eventually become a standard.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

In discussing and describing the schedule of market classes and grades used by the marketing livestock, meats, and wool division of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, several familiar terms are used. Although most of these terms are in common usage among stockmen everywhere and particularly at central livestock markets, it is an unfortunate fact that different meanings are frequently attached to the same term. Hence it seems desirable to define briefly the more important terms so that there will be no confusion in the mind of the reader regarding what follows.

Three terms of special importance are (1) conformation, (2) finish, and (3) quality. As a matter of fact the whole schedule is based largely on these three characteristics and variations in them. Although an effort has been made to be specific in these definitions and to limit carefully the boundaries of each, the three characteristics are very closely related and there is between them a certain dependency which frequently causes considerable difficulty to students and to men actually engaged in handling livestock. For example, it is

impossible to have a high degree of conformation without at least a fair degree of finish and quality, and best quality is invariably associated with reasonably high degrees of conformation and finish. This close relationship between the three characteristics frequently leads to using the terms rather loosely, and to considerable overlapping of definitions.

One reason for selecting these three characteristics as the basis for much of the schedule is the fact that they are inherent in the animal. They are not subject to trade preference and, in a given animal at a given time, can not be changed. Furthermore every meat animal possesses a certain degree of each of these characteristics—conformation, finish, and quality. In fact the chief difference between animals from the standpoint of meat production, consists in variations in the degrees possessed.

CONFORMATION

Conformation is the build, outline, or contour of the animal. It is due largely to the size and shape of the bones and muscles and the proportions between the different primal parts, such as round, loin, rib, or shoulder. Hence conformation is chiefly attributable to breeding, though sex condition [2] also exerts a powerful influence, except in the case of very young animals. Fat covering is responsible for marked modifications of conformation, hence feeding and care have an important bearing on the matter. Standards or ideals of conformation depend on the immediate use to which the animal is to be put. Grade for grade, a smoother and more rounded conformation is demanded in animals intended for immediate slaughter than in those which are to be used for further feeding.

FINISH

Finish is fat. It includes both the fat on the outside of the animal's body and on the inside of the abdominal and thoracic cavities; also the deposits of fat which lie along and between the larger muscles. Naturally in the live animal the interior fats can be judged only by analogy. Finish involves the quantity, quality, and distribution of fat. Like conformation it is dependent somewhat on inherited tendencies or breeding, but in the main it depends on the quantity, kind, and quality of feed, sex condition of the animal, and on methods of handling.

QUALITY

Quality is, strictly speaking, a characteristic of the muscle or lean meat of the animal and of the intramuscular and intercellular fat contained therein. It also involves the relative size, shape, and condition of the bones and the ratio of bone to muscle and fat. In animals intended for further feeding, quality involves still another characteristic, a characteristic which, though of vast importance, is rather intangible and difficult to describe fully, namely, the ability to economically take on added weight. This is not a concrete thing

[2] Sex condition is a term used to cover the presence or absence of some of the essential organs which differentiate the sexes. Hence there are males and castrated males, females and spayed females.

but rather an inherited trait or tendency. Quality in a live animal is a rather difficult thing to describe. By experienced stockmen it can, however, be judged with fair accuracy from certain external evidences such as fineness and softness of hair, thickness and pliability of hide, width of muzzle, refinement of head, and other similar characteristics. Frequently these external features are called quality. When this is done it simply amounts to mistaking the tangible, external evidences of a thing for the thing itself.

MARKET GROUPS OF LIVESTOCK

Present day market practice involves sorting livestock into seven general groups as follows: (1) Species or kinds, as cattle, hogs, and sheep; (2) classes, as steers, sows, ewes, etc.; (3) subclasses, as slaughter, feeder, stocker, etc.; (4) use selections, as butcher, bacon, packing, etc.; (5) age selections, as yearlings, two-year-olds, etc.; (6) weight selections, as lightweight, mediumweight, heavyweight; (7) grades, as, choice, medium, common, etc.

BASIS OF CLASSES

Class.—A class is a subdivision of a kind or species and consists of a group of animals which differ from animals in other similar groups in certain essential physiological respects. In the attached schedule class is, as a rule, based on sex condition. Hence in cattle there are five classes: Steers, heifers, cows, bulls, and stags. Each class represents a natural and easily distinguished group. All animals in a given class differ from animals in other classes in certain broad, general, but nevertheless important respects.

Although meat animals are separated into classes generally on the basis of sex condition, the real reason for such segregation lies deeper. If it were merely a question of the animal being male or female, castrated or uncastrated, neither the butcher nor the consumer would have any real interest in the matter. The fact that slaughterers and consumers usually do differentiate and discriminate sharply between animals of different sex conditions therefore indicates that there is some basic and fundamental reason for so doing.

This discrimination is really due to the fact that sex condition has an important bearing on the three characteristics—conformation, finish, and quality—and on the way in which the three are combined in the animal. In each class these three fundamental characteristics exist in a ratio peculiar to that class. For example, one class may be superior in conformation but relatively deficient in finish, whereas another may stand fairly high in quality but be somewhat lacking in conformation. This is true, despite the fact that a very close relationship exists between the three characteristics and that it is impossible materially to raise or lower one without seriously affecting the other two.

The real reason, therefore, that steers, cows, and bulls sell at different prices is the fact that these different classes possess conformation, finish, and quality combined in different proportions. Generally speaking, grade for grade, the class possessing the highest relative degree of quality is preferred and brings the highest price.

This importance of the ratio in which the three fundamental characteristics occur as opposed to mere sex condition, which is in

reality a cause rather than an effect, is indicated by the fact that in the case of very young animals sex condition is entirely ignored as a price-determining factor. Hence the present schedule is inconsistent to the extent that vealers, lambs, and pigs are considered as classes, whereas they are in reality age selections. Sex condition as the basis of class is abandoned in these instances because, in a very young animal, sex condition has not had time to exert much influence on conformation, quality, or finish. In other words, in vealers, lambs, and pigs the degrees of conformation, quality, and finish are not as a rule altered by the fact that the animal is male, female, or unsexed. Such animals, nevertheless, constitute market groups of great economic importance and they are handled in such a way as to make it inadvisable to treat vealers, for example, as an age selection of the cattle schedule. Hence consistency is sacrificed for convenience and in deference to market practice.

BASIS OF SUBCLASSES

Subclass.—A subclass is a subdivision of a class and consists of a group of animals which differ from animals in other similar groups in relative suitability for certain general uses.

The subclasses are slaughter, feeder, stocker, milker, springer, breeder, and shearer. In the case of the first three (slaughter, feeder, and stocker), the chief basis of the subclass is degree of finish or fat. The other subclasses, however, are based on suitability for special uses which involve various considerations.

Slaughter animals are those possessing sufficient fat or finish to meet the requirements of the consuming trade. This designation covers all animals which will produce meat that is wholesome and fit for human food. Any such animal may be slaughtered and consumed.

Feeders are animals which lack sufficient finish to produce the highest grades of meat but which show evidences of ability to take on additional flesh and fat economically, most of the gain resulting from additional fat or finish rather than growth.

Stockers are animals which not only lack sufficient finish to produce the highest grades of meat but are usually immature and therefore capable of material additional growth as well as the acquisition of additional finish.

Briefly, the slaughter subclass includes all animals suitable for producing wholesome meat. Feeders are those which, with proper feed and handling, will produce a greater quantity of meat and usually of a higher grade than if slaughtered immediately, whereas stockers are those animals which, because of their age and immaturity, are capable of making greater total weight gains than feeders, and which depend largely on growth to make the gains.

So far as trade practice goes, no hard and fast line exists between these three groups. At a given time, wholly similar animals may be purchased by one man for slaughter, by another as feeders, and by a third as stockers. These three groups, therefore, are distinguishable only in a general way and the ultimate test is relative suitability for a given use. Actually feeders and stockers are subdivisions of the slaughter subclass.

BASIS OF USE SELECTIONS

Use selection.— A use selection is a subdivision of a subclass and consists of a group of animals which differ from animals in other similar groups in relative suitability for certain specialized or limited uses.

Subclasses are really major use selections, but in some of these subclasses there are certain groups of animals which show exceptional suitability for certain specialized uses. For example, slaughter hogs are divided into butcher hogs, bacon hogs and packing hogs, according to their suitability for these different special purposes. The real basis of these three use selections is type or conformation. For instance, certain hogs are superior from the standpoint of bacon production because they possess long and relatively slender bodies, whereas other hogs are especially adapted to packing or lard production because of the great depth of flesh or fat they carry on most portions of the body. In the schedule here outlined the use selection has not been applied to all kinds of livestock, because in some instances the manufacture or processing of the products resulting from slaughter has not developed to a point which makes such segregation necessary.

BASIS OF AGE SELECTIONS

Age selection.—An age selection is a subdivision of either a use selection or a subclass and consists of a group of animals which fall within certain specified age limits.

The age selections in the schedule are practically self-explanatory. Animals are frequently sorted on the basis of age, largely because of variations in conformation, quality, and finish which occur with increasing age. In the case of breeding stock, milkers, and springers, other factors are frequently considered, such as prospective life of usefulness and the like. For some years past there has been a rather marked tendency on the part of the consuming public to demand meat from younger animals. This is due partly to the demand for smaller cuts than formerly and partly to other economic considerations.

In a young animal, if properly finished, the consumer can get much of the tenderness and juiciness required for palatability without the excessive fat of the finished, mature animal for which the average consumer has no use. Because of such considerations, in some kinds of livestock age has a rather important bearing on the price the market will pay. This is particularly true in the case of cattle and sheep. There is somewhat the same tendency with regard to swine but in that case the demand for comparatively young animals is revealed in strict limitations of weight. This is possible because swine husbandry in the United States has developed to a point where age requirements can practically be insured by weight specifications.

BASIS OF WEIGHT SELECTIONS

Weight selection.—A weight selection is a subdivision of either an age selection or a use selection and consists of a group of animals which fall within certain specified weight limits.

The weight selections in the schedule need no detailed explanation. The system of sorting meat animals on the basis of weight is a

direct response to demands of the consuming public. Certain classes of consumers still require heavyweight cuts of meat, but there is now a marked tendency on the part of a majority of consumers to demand lightweight cuts. Stockyard operatives therefore sort animals on the basis of weight in order to obtain cuts of meat which will meet these varying requirements.

BASIS OF GRADES

Grade.—A grade is a subdivision of a weight selection and consists of a group of animals which differ materially from animals in other similar groups in the resultant of the degrees of conformation, finish and quality possessed.

Grades constitute the last but by all means the most important subdivisions of meat animals. Grades are based on a combination of the three fundamental characteristics—conformation, finish and quality. Every meat animal possesses each of these characteristics but the degrees possessed vary with the individual.

Grade is not determined by any single characteristic but is the resultant of all three. For example, an animal may possess a sufficiently high degree of conformation to grade good but may be so lacking in finish that it can not be graded higher than medium.

No grade represents an exact point or a definite degree. On the contrary, each grade has a certain width with upper and lower limits. This means that two animals may show some variation in the resultant of conformation, finish, and quality and yet be placed in the same grade. If the variations are great, however, they will fall into different grades. Although each grade has a certain width and covers a certain range of degrees, the grade of an individual animal occupies a specific point within the range.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHEDULE

The livestock received at any livestock market represents a wide variety of animals—young, old, fat, thin, highly-bred, poorly-bred, male, female, and unsexed—animals of almost every degree of fitness and unfitness, and all are dumped into the market hopper and must be disposed of in some manner. Some of them are highly useful for certain purposes but wholly useless for others. Some appeal strongly to certain classes of buyers but are rejected absolutely by others. Under these circumstances it is essential that this heterogeneous mass be sorted and divided into smaller groups.

The chief basis for such segregation is the variety in buyers' demands, but it is equally essential to the market reporter, whose business it is to tell the outside world just what happens on the great livestock markets. Naturally each buyer wants animals which will best serve his own peculiar needs, and the seller must meet these requirements by sorting his livestock on that basis. The market reporter must have names and terms with which to designate the various groups of animals sold on the market, and the reader must interpret these terms in the same way as the reporter.

The schedule which follows is based on conditions existing at most central livestock markets. All of the groups rarely appear on a single market on a given day. On certain markets some of the

segregations are never made. However, in drawing up a schedule for the country as a whole, every reasonable possibility must be taken into account, and the schedule must be made sufficiently elaborate to take care of all markets.

These schedules are not the result of academic studies and discussions. On the contrary, the proposition was approached from exactly the opposite end. An earnest effort was made to find out precisely what happens on the markets in the way of sorting or segregation, and a schedule of classes, grades, and other market groups was drawn up which covers a great majority of such operations even on the largest and most highly organized markets of the country.

This schedule is designed to lend itself to almost unlimted expansion or contraction. For example, if on a given market all animals are slaughtered and none of them are sold as stockers or feeders, the stocker and feeder schedules will be disregarded. If on that market the trade does not discriminate between yearlings and mature cattle the two groups may be combined.

The same is true of the weight selections. If there is a market where buyers do not insist that livestock be sorted into weight groups but take the animals just as they come, the market reporter merely quotes a price range covering all weights. Likewise, at many markets, particularly the smaller ones, it is customary to buy, in mixed lots, animals that represent two or more grades. Where that is done the market reporter merely combines the grades included and reports a single price range on the lot. Such lumping of animals in job lots is usually poor practice, but if that is the practice at any market these schedules are sufficiently elastic to cover the situation.

As marketing progresses from the primitive, there is a natural tendency toward greater refinement of practice and constantly increasing segregation. This tendency is a part of the existing strong trend toward specialization. Certain groups of consumers demand cuts of meat of certain weights and grades and the slaughterer in turn insists that the seller sort his live animals in such a way that he can purchase the animals which will produce the desired cuts of meat.

CATTLE [3]

Cattle are bovine animals which have attained sufficient age and maturity to make reproduction possible. Such animals may be incapable of reproduction because of having been castrated or spayed, or because of certain physical abnormalities. Cattle, when slaughtered, produce beef.

As offered on our central markets, cattle probably present a wider variety of conformation, finish, and quality than any other kind of livestock. All are offered for sale, however, and all must be disposed of. Fortunately, uses have been found for practically every extreme and, generally speaking, a cash market awaits practically anything the producer may have to offer. A rather lengthy schedule is therefore required to provide a place for every group into which buyers and sellers may want to sort the cattle.

[3] As a rule the group names used in this bulletin are used in the ordinary and generally accepted sense. In a few instances, however, it has been necessary, in order to be specific and avoid confusion, to limit and modify somewhat the definitions of certain names and terms. In all such cases it should be understood that any deviations from generally accepted definitions are only for purposes of this schedule and to assist the reader in understanding the system of classifying and grading outlined herewith.

Cattle schedule

Class	Subclass	Age selection	Weight selection	Grade
Steers	Slaughter	Yearling	Lightweight—800 pounds down	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5. Low Cutter or No. 6.[2]
			Mediumweight—800 to 950 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—950 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		2 years old and over	Lightweight—1,100 pounds down	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5. Low Cutter or No. 6.[2]
			Mediumweight—1,100 to 1,300 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—1,300 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5.
	Feeder	All ages[1]	Lightweight—850 pounds down	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—850 to 1,000 pounds	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—1,000 pounds up	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
	Stocker	All ages[1]	Lightweight—600 pounds down	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—600 to 750 pounds	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—750 pounds up	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.

[1] See footnote 1, page 13.

[2] See footnote 2, page 13.

Cattle schedule—Continued

Class	Subclass	Age selection	Weight selection	Grade
Heifers	Slaughter	Yearling	Lightweight—800 pounds down	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5. Low Cutter or No. 6.[2]
			Mediumweight—800 to 900 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—900 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		2 years old and over	Lightweight—900 pounds down	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5. Low Cutter or No. 6.[2]
			Mediumweight—900 to 1,050 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—1,050 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5.
	Feeder	All ages [1]	All weights [1]	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
	Stocker	All ages [1]	All weights [1]	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
Cows	Slaughter	All ages [1]	All weights [1]	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5. Low Cutter or No. 6.[2]
	Feeder	All ages [1]	All weights [1]	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
	Stocker	All ages [1]	All weights [1]	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
	Milker	All ages [1]	All weights [1]	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
	Springer	All ages [1]	All weights [1]	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.

[1] See footnote 1, page 13.

[2] See footnote 2 page 13.

Cattle schedule—Continued

Class	Subclass	Age selection	Weight selection	Grade
Bulls	Slaughter	Yearling	All weights[1]	Choice or No. 1.[3] Good or No. 2.[3] Medium or No. 3.[4] Common or No. 4.[4] Cutter or No. 5.
		2 years old and over	Lightweight—1,300 pounds down	Choice or No. 1.[3] Good or No. 2.[3] Medium or No. 3.[4] Common or No. 4.[4] Cutter or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—1,300 to1,500 pounds	Choice or No. 1.[3] Good or No. 2.[3] Medium or No. 3.[4] Common or No. 4.[4]
			Heavyweight—1,500 pounds up	Choice or No. 1.[3] Good or No. 2.[3] Medium or No. 3.[4] Common or No. 4.[4]
	Feeder	All ages[1]	All weights[1]	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
	Stocker	All ages[1]	All weights[1]	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
Stags	Slaughter	All ages[1]	All weights[1]	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cutter or No. 5. Low Cutter or No. 6.[2]

[1] In the schedule appearing in this bulletin such designations as "all ages" and "all weights" occur frequently. These should not be interpreted literally but rather in the light of the context. For example in the case of Feeder steers "all ages" could not in reason include an 8 or 10-year old steer because such a steer could not meet the usual requirements of feeder steers. In a word "all ages" means simply that the group includes all animals which can meet the other requirements of the group without respect to age. Similar considerations apply to the caption "all weights."

[2] In most livestock grade schedules published heretofore the lowest grade of slaughter cattle has been designated as "canner." The fact that only a small percentage of the meat from cattle so graded is now canned has rendered the term "canner" largely a misnomer. Hence, in this schedule, the term "low cutter" has been substituted and covers most of the cattle commonly known as "canners."

[3] Beef bulls.

[4] Bologna bulls.

This cattle schedule contains numerous group names. The experienced stockman is familiar with most of them. The following brief definitions are therefore given for the benefit of those who have only limited knowledge of livestock and livestock markets. The meaning of the various column headings, such as class, subclass, and age selection, has already been explained. It remains, however, to define briefly each of the group names appearing under each of these general headings.

CLASSES OF CATTLE

Cattle are divided into five classes—steers, heifers, cows, bulls, and stags.

Steer.—A steer is a male bovine animal which was castrated before it had reached sufficient maturity to make reproduction

possible and has developed physical characteristics peculiar to its class. As a rule the animal is castrated when it is not more than a few weeks old, but on the range castration is sometimes deferred until the calf is 3 or 4 months old (fig. 1).

Heifer.—A heifer is a female bovine animal which has never had a calf and which has not reached a state of advanced pregnancy (fig. 2).

Cow.—A cow is a female bovine animal which has had one or more calves or which has reached an advanced stage of pregnancy (fig. 3).

Bull.—A bull is an uncastrated male bovine animal which has reached sufficient maturity to make reproduction possible and has developed physical characteristics peculiar to its class. Bulls as a class show greater development of masculine characteristics than do stags (fig. 4).

Stag.—A stag is a male bovine animal which was castrated after it had reached sufficient maturity to make reproduction possible and which has developed many of the physical characteristics peculiar to the adult uncastrated male (fig. 5).

SUBCLASSES OF CATTLE

The next groups into which cattle are divided are called subclasses. Subclasses are formed on the basis of peculiar suitability for certain general purposes. As a rule, market classes of cattle are divided into three subclasses—slaughter (see fig. 1), feeder (fig. 6), and stocker (fig. 7). There are some variations, the number of subclasses of cows being increased to five by the addition of milkers and springers, whereas all stags are combined in a single subclass called slaughter.

Theoretically there might be just one subclass—slaughter—because cattle of practically every description are slaughtered. Furthermore, any bovine animal offered on the market can find a place in the slaughter subclass.

General market practice, however, discriminates between animals on the basis of relative suitability for certain purposes. Hence, although it is perfectly possible to slaughter any individual animal and thereby produce a certain quantity of edible meat of a certain grade, it frequently happens that the animal possesses characteristics which render it particularly suitable for further feeding, breeding, or other purpose than immediate meat production. As the terms slaughter, feeder, and stocker as they apply to all kinds of meat animals have been defined, detailed discussion is unnecessary here.

There are two additional subclasses of cows—milkers and springers.

A *milker* is a cow which is giving milk, usually one which has recently had a calf. This subclass is largely confined to animals of dairy breeding or cows to be utilized for milk production.

A *springer* is a pregnant female bovine animal, usually one which is due to calve within a short time. As received in public stockyards springers are usually due to calve within a few days. The same limitations regarding breeding and utilization apply in springers as in milkers.

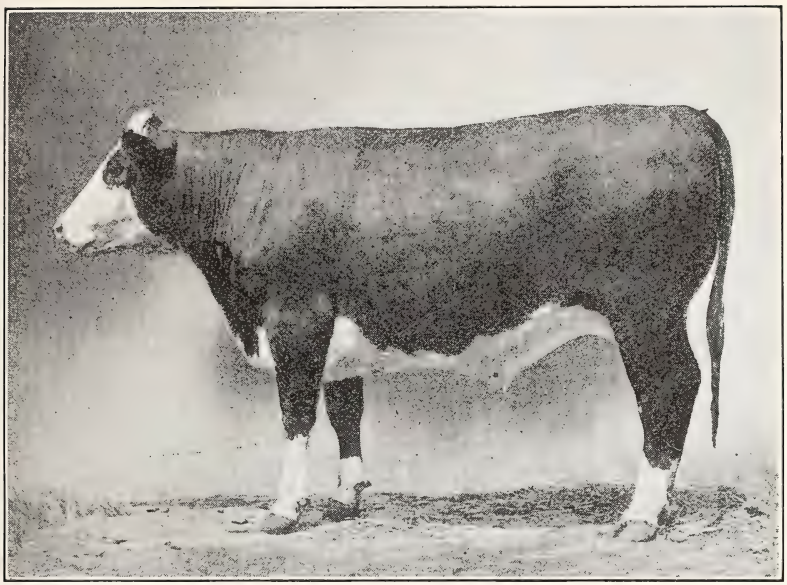

FIG. 1.—Slaughter steer (good grade)

FIG. 2.—Slaughter heifer (good grade)

Neither of these groups is particularly important although in the course of a year considerable numbers are handled on certain markets. Such animals are not bought and sold to produce meat but rather for milk production either immediately or later. In the case of milkers and springers, neither age nor weight is of sufficient importance as a price-determining factor to make segregation on these bases necessary, and only four grades are recognized.

AGE SELECTIONS OF CATTLE

The third series of groups is called age selection and the meaning of the terms is apparent. As a rule, cattle are sorted into two groups with respect to age—yearlings, including all cattle under 2 years of age, and 2 years old and over.

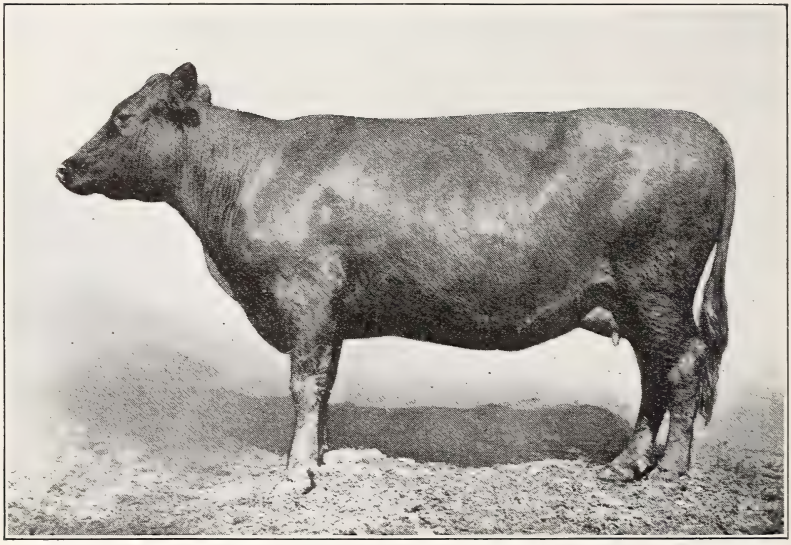

FIG. 3.—Slaughter cow (good grade)

WEIGHT SELECTIONS OF CATTLE

The fourth subdivisions are known as weight selections. These weight groups vary in number between classes and there is some variation in weight limits of the various groups, depending upon the subclass and age selection considered. The three main weight selections are lightweight, mediumweight, and heavyweight. The exact limits of each vary with the class, subclass, and age of the animals composing the group. For example, lightweight in yearling steers and heifers includes animals weighing from 800 pounds down, in mature steers, 2 years old and over, lightweight includes everything from 1,100 pounds down. Similar variations occur in the mediumweight and heavyweight groups. Weight segregations do not appear in all classes and subclasses. Such segregations appear in the schedule only when consumers' demands make it necessary for traders to sort cattle into different weight groups.

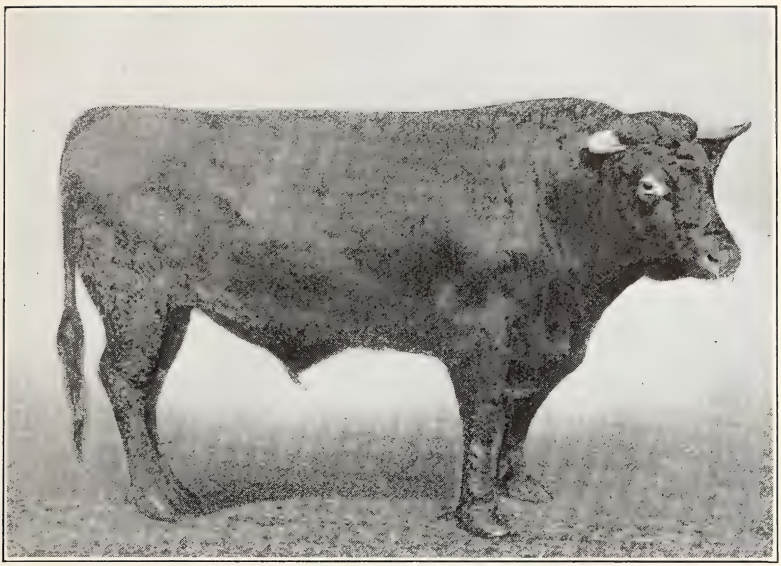

FIG. 4.—Slaughter bull (good grade)

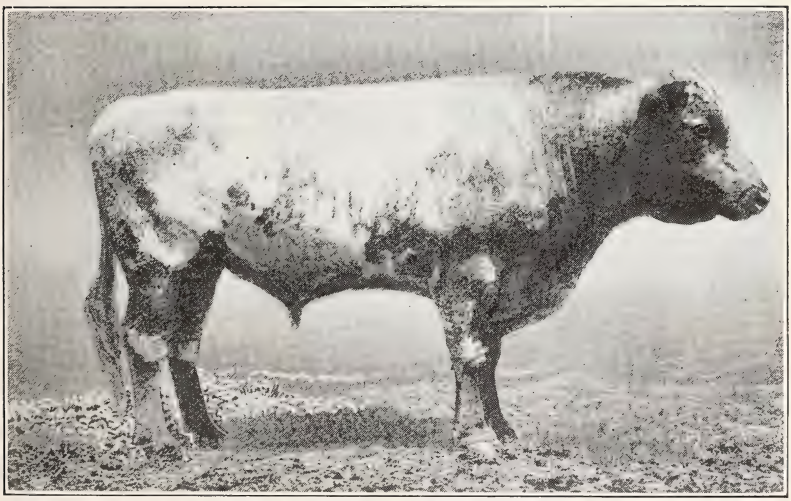

FIG. 5.—Slaughter stag (good grade)

FIG. 6.—Feeder steer (good grade)

FIG. 7.—Stocker steer (good grade)

GRADES OF CATTLE

The fifth and last subdividing of market cattle is known as grading, and the units resulting from the subdivision, as grades. The varying degrees of the characteristics, conformation, finish, and quality possessed by different animals determine the grades into which they shall be placed.

The number of grades of cattle varies somewhat with the class, subclass, age, and weight of the animals considered, partly because certain groups of animals present a wider range of variation in conformation, finish, and quality than do other groups. For example, slaughter steers are divided into seven grades—prime, choice, good, medium, common, cutter, and low cutter—whereas only six grades have been provided for slaughter cows and five grades for slaughter bulls.

The chief reason for this curtailment in the number of grades is that the best cows and bulls are too deficient in conformation, finish, and quality to be comparable with the best steers or heifers. Hence the schedule provides no prime grade for cows or bulls. Another reason for reducing the number of grades in certain groups is that in such instances animals which meet the requirements of the preceding segregations, particularly the age and weight specifications, could not ordinarily possess the degrees of conformation, finish, and quality necessary for inclusion in the omitted grades.

Two other variations occur in the grade schedule which, without some explanation, might prove puzzling. In the case of stockers and feeders, the first grade is called fancy instead of prime, and inferior grade is substituted for cutter grade. The term fancy is substituted for prime largely because, in the popular mind, the term prime is associated with a high degree of fat or finish which stockers and feeders do not possess. Best stockers and feeders possess a comparatively high degree of quality, a somewhat lower degree of conformation, and are decidedly lacking in finish. To provide a name for this combination of the three fundamental characteristics which would not be confusing, fancy has been used.

Similar considerations account for the absence of cutter grade from the stocker and feeder schedules. The term "cutter" conveys a picture of a method of handling and disposing of a carcass after slaughter. As in the case of stockers and feeders immediate slaughter is not involved, "cutter" is inappropriate as a grade name. Roughly, inferior grade in stockers and feeders corresponds with cutter grade in slaughter cattle, but the two terms do not necessarily imply the same degrees of conformation, finish, and quality.

In most schedules or classifications of bulls in use heretofore, mature slaughter bulls have been divided into two general groups known as *beef* or *butcher* bulls and *bologna* bulls. In some instances these groups have been dignified by being called classes. Such procedure does not seem to be warranted. Careful investigation shows that the real difference between so-called beef or butcher bulls and bologna bulls is merely a difference in the degrees of conformation, finish, and quality possessed by the animals. This being true, there would seem to be no reason why such bulls can not be sorted, bought, and sold on the basis of grade.

In this schedule, therefore, slaughter bulls, 2 years old and over, are divided into five grades—choice, good, medium, common, and cutter. It is believed that choice and good grades cover all bulls which heretofore have been inexactly called beef or butcher bulls. Medium and common grades, on the other hand, include what are familiarly known as bologna bulls. It is believed that this method of handling the matter is more logical and more nearly represents the actual facts involved than do any of the schemes of segregation used heretofore. This plan involves no change in existing methods of sorting, buying, and selling bulls. It simply constitutes a change in names or nomenclature.

CALVES

Calves constitute a group of bovine animals which have not attained sufficient age or maturity to be called "cattle" but which have passed the "vealer" stage. Stated differently a calf has passed the vealer [4] stage but has not attained sufficient maturity to make reproduction possible.

The meat produced by calves is neither beef nor veal but possesses some of the characteristics of both. Any bovine animal which does not show evidence of a whole-milk diet or some other diet which will produce meat wholly comparable with that produced by a whole-milk diet, and which animal is not sufficiently mature to produce beef according to the generally accepted definition of the term, is a calf.

Calf schedule

Class	Subclass	Weight selection	Grade [a]
Steer	Slaughter	Lightweight—200 pounds down	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
		Mediumweight—200 to 300 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
		Heavyweight—300 pounds up	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
	Feeder and stocker	Lightweight—350 pounds down	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		Heavyweight—350 pounds up	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.

[a] In the Slaughter subclass of all calf classes certain upper grades are omitted. In the lightweight groups both choice and prime and in the medium and heavyweight selections prime grade are lacking. These omissions are necessitated by the fact that a calf, to possess a sufficiently high degree of conformation, quality, and finish, to grade choice or prime, must have attained some maturity; and, when it has attained such maturity, it will almost inevitably be too heavy to meet the weight limitations of the lightweight and mediumweight groups.

[4] See definition of vealer on page 23.

Calf schedule—Continued

Class	Subclass	Weight selection	Grade
Heifer	Slaughter	Lightweight—200 pounds down	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
		Mediumweight—200 to 300 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
		Heavyweight—300 pounds up	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
	Feeder and stocker	Lightweight—350 pounds down	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		Heavyweight—350 pounds up	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
Bull	Slaughter	Lightweight—200 pounds down	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
		Mediumweight—200 to 300 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
		Heavyweight—300 pounds up	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
	Feeder and stocker	Lightweight—350 pounds down	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		Heavyweight—350 pounds up	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.

SUBDIVISIONS OF CALF SCHEDULE

Calves are divided into three classes—steer, heifer, and bull (figs. 8 and 9). This segregation is made because, although as a group they have not attained an age where sex condition exerts a material influence on conformation, finish or quality, stocker and feeder buyers discriminate against bull and heifer calves anticipating discrimination against them when they are resold at a later date. It should be added, however, that at central markets comparatively few bull calves are offered for sale, most producers finding it uneconomical to allow their males, aside from the few required for breeding stock, to remain uncastrated until they reach the calf stage.

FIG. 8.—Slaughter steer calf (good grade)

Each class of calves is divided into three subclasses—slaughter, feeder, and stocker—but the last two are combined in a single group. The definition of each of these subclasses corresponds in all essential respects with those already given for corresponding subclasses of cattle, and hence are not repeated here.

FIG. 9.—Slaughter heifer calf (good grade)

No age selection is included in the schedule, because calves are seldom sorted on the basis of age, the group itself being in reality an age selection.

Weight is a matter of considerable importance in buying and selling calves, hence several weight selections are listed.

The grade schedule is comparable with that of cattle. Practically the only new feature is the substitution of the term Cull to designate the lowest grade of slaughter calves and the omission of cutter, and low cutter grades.

In the case of cattle, the cutter grade derives its chief significance from the fact that as a rule the carcasses resulting from the slaughter of such animals are rarely sold intact. Instead they are cut up, certain portions such as ribs and loins being sold over the butcher's block, and the rest of the carcass boned out and either sold in the

FIG. 10.—Vealer (good grade)

form of boneless cuts or used in the manufacture of sausage, dried beef, or other cured or semicured products. Cattle that fall into the low cutter grade are usually boned out and used for either canning or sausage purposes.

In the case of calves, boning and canning are rare; hence cutter and low cutter grades are omitted. It is recognized, however, that some calves are marketed which are too low in conformation, finish, and quality to be included in the common grade, and to cover such animals the term cull has been used.

VEALERS

A *vealer* (fig. 10) is a bovine animal which has subsisted on a whole-milk diet or some other ration which produces a similar effect on the animal and its flesh. Vealers produce veal, and any

bovine animal which is incapable of producing veal, belongs to one or another of the calf or cattle classes. As a rule, 12 weeks is the maximum age for vealers, though there are exceptions to this. Some animals, because of a change in diet or in methods of handling, cease to be vealers and become calves at an earlier age.

Vealer schedule

Class	Subclass	Weight selection	Grade [1]
Vealers	Slaughter	Lightweight—110 pounds down	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
		Mediumweight—110 to 180 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		Heavyweight—180 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3.

[1] Cull and common grades are omitted from the heavyweight group and cull from the mediumweight group of vealers, because experience has shown that animals meeting the requirements laid down for vealers and having attained sufficient weight to fall in either of these groups must almost invariably possess degrees of conformation, finish, and quality which would put them in higher grades than those omitted.

SUBDIVISIONS OF VEALER SCHEDULE

In the vealer schedule the proposition that class must be based on sex condition is abandoned. Strictly speaking, vealers constitute, not a class but an age selection. If vealers were divided into classes on the basis of sex condition, as are cattle and calves, it would serve no purpose except that of consistency and would materially extend the schedule. In a very young animal sex condition has not had time to exert a material influence on conformation, finish, and quality. Hence all vealers are considered as a single class.

There is only one subclass of vealers, called slaughter, because all vealers are either slaughtered or held until they become calves.

There is no age selection in the vealer schedule for two reasons: (1) The term "vealer" itself is an age selection and its definition confines the group within rather narrow age limits. (2) Whatever discrimination the trade makes on the basis of age is expressed in the various weight selections set forth in the schedule.

Weight is a matter of considerably greater importance in vealers than in calves. Buyers make fine distinctions between vealers of different weights. Therefore in the schedule, three weight groups appear within the narrow limits of 80 pounds. The weight selections in vealers are lightweight, mediumweight, and heavyweight. The proper weight specifications appear after each.

The grade schedule under vealers is comparable with that of other classes of animals already described and is based on the same considerations.

SWINE

For purposes of this schedule the term "swine" is used to designate all domesticated animals commonly known as hogs or pigs.

Considering the industry as a whole, swine husbandry has probably reached a higher stage of development in the United States than is true of either cattle or sheep. Although the best bred cattle and sheep make just as near an approach to perfection as do the best specimens of hogs, considering market receipts as a whole, swine show a higher average of breeding than do any other kind of meat animal.

For simplification swine are first divided into two general groups—hogs and pigs. This grouping is also in keeping with market practice.

A *hog* is a member of the swine family which has reached sufficient maturity to make reproduction possible. The animal may be incapable of reproduction because of having been castrated or unsexed, or because of certain physical abnormalities.

Hog schedule

Class	Subclass	Use selection	Weight selection	Grade
Barrows and gilts	Slaughter	Butcher and bacon.	Light Lights—130 to 160 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Lightweight—160 to 200 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Mediumweight—200 to 250 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Heavyweight—250 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
	Feeder and stocker.		Lightweight—130 to 160 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
Sows	Slaughter	Packing	Lightweight—275 pounds down	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Medium weight—275 to 375 pounds	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—375 pounds up	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
	Feeder and stocker.		Lightweight—175 pounds down	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—175 to 250 pounds	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—250 pounds up	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.

Hog schedule—Continued

Class	Subclass	Use selection	Weight selection	Grade
Stags	Slaughter		Lightweight—300 pounds down	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—300 to 450 pound	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—450 pounds up	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
Boars	Slaughter		All weights	Ungraded.

CLASSES OF HOGS

Hogs are divided into five classes ,such classes being based on sex condition. The classes of hogs are barrows, gilts, sows, stags, and boars.

A *barrow* (figs. 11 to 13) is a male hog which was castrated before it had reached sufficient maturity to make reproduction possible and has developed physical characteristics peculiar to its class. As a rule castration is done when the animal is but a few weeks old.

A *gilt* (figs. 14, 15, and 16) is a female hog which has neither had pigs nor reached a state of advanced pregnancy.

A *sow* (fig. 17) is a female hog which has had pigs or has reached a state of advanced pregnancy.

A *stag* (fig. 18) is a male hog which was castrated after it had reached sufficient maturity to make reproduction possible and which has developed many of the physical characteristics peculiar to the uncastrated adult male.

A *boar* (fig. 19) is an uncastrated male hog which has reached sufficient maturity to make reproduction possible and has developed the physical characteristics peculiar to its class. Boars as a class show more pronounced development of the masculine characteristics than do stags.

Practically all hogs reach market maturity and are slaughtered at a comparatively early age, consequently the various factors which in more aged animals bring about important changes in the tissues and body structure have not had as much time to function as is usually true in the case of cattle. Thus, while there are, actually, five classes of hogs based on sex condition, most hogs marketed as barrows and gilts are comparatively young and for that reason do not show the marked differences in conformation, finish, and quality attributable to sex condition so apparent in more aged animals. Hence they usually sell together without appreciable discrimination either in demand or prices. For that reason, in this schedule, these two classes have been combined.

SUBCLASSES OF HOGS

Each class is divided into subclasses on the basis of the general use to which the animal or its carcass is put. Slaughter is one sub-

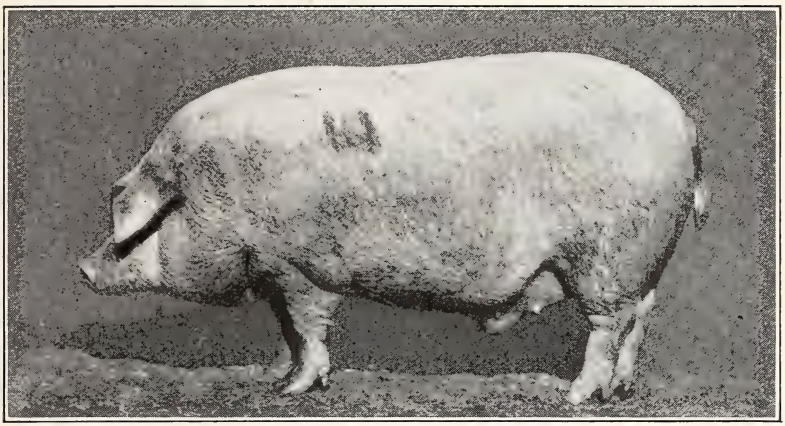

FIG. 11.—Barrow, lard type (good grade)

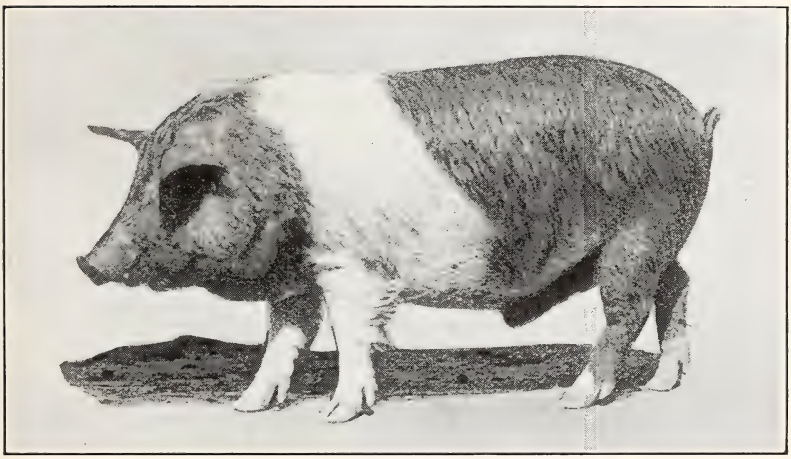

FIG. 12.—Barrow, mean type (good grade)

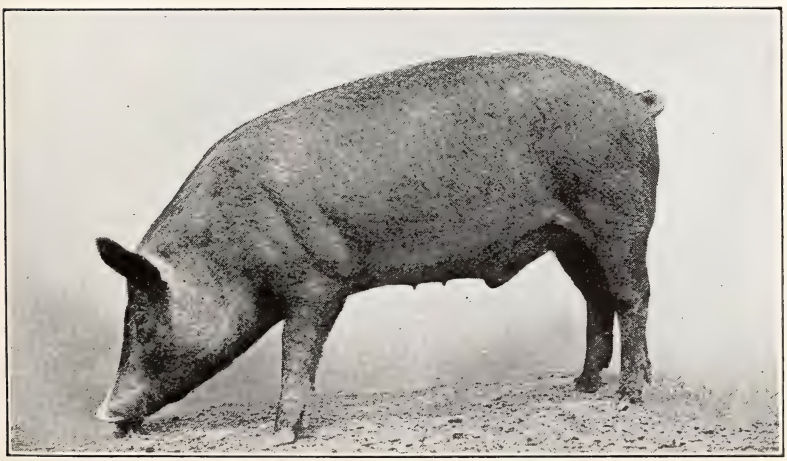

FIG. 13.—Barrow, bacon type (good grade)

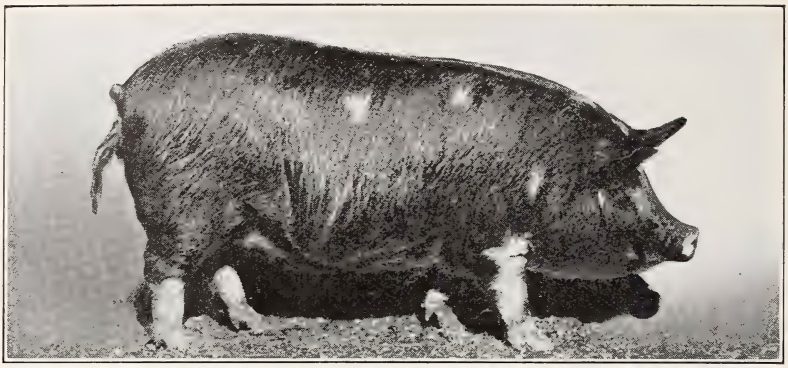

FIG. 14.—Gilt, lard type (good grade)

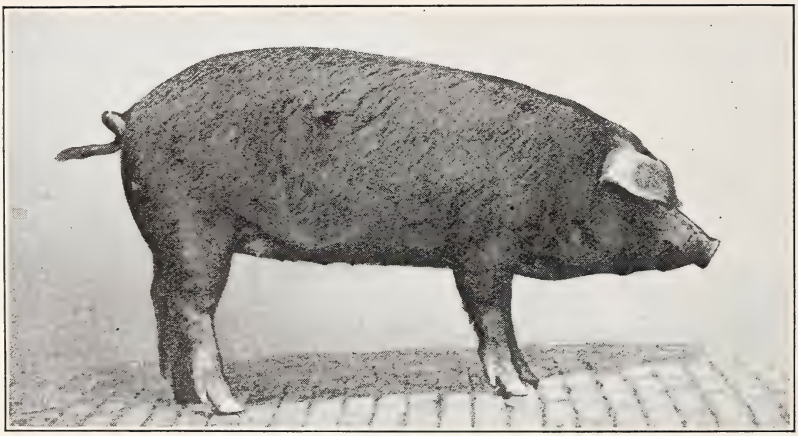

FIG. 15.—Gilt, mean type (good grade)

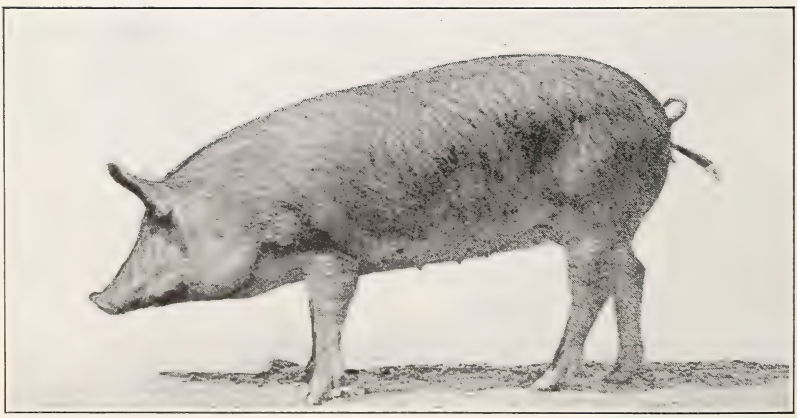

FIG. 16.—Gilt, bacon type (good grade)

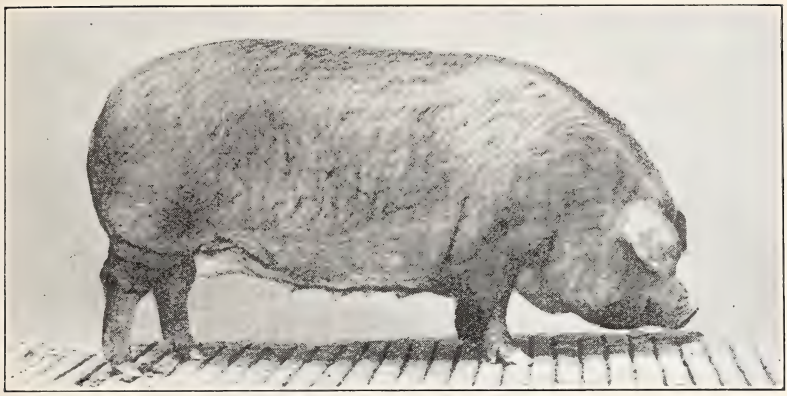

FIG. 17.—Packing sow (good grade)

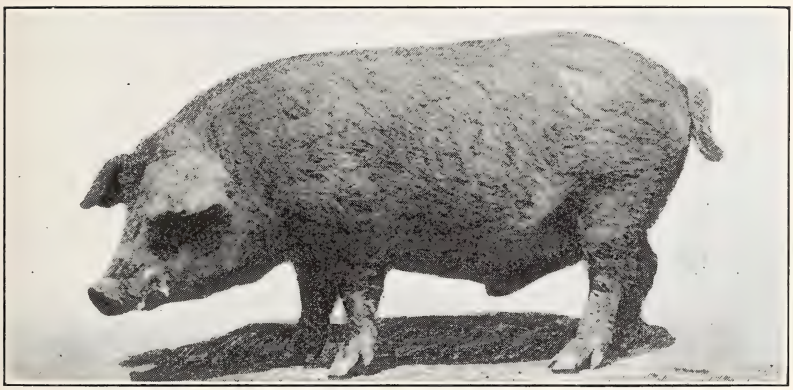

FIG. 18.—Stag (good grade)

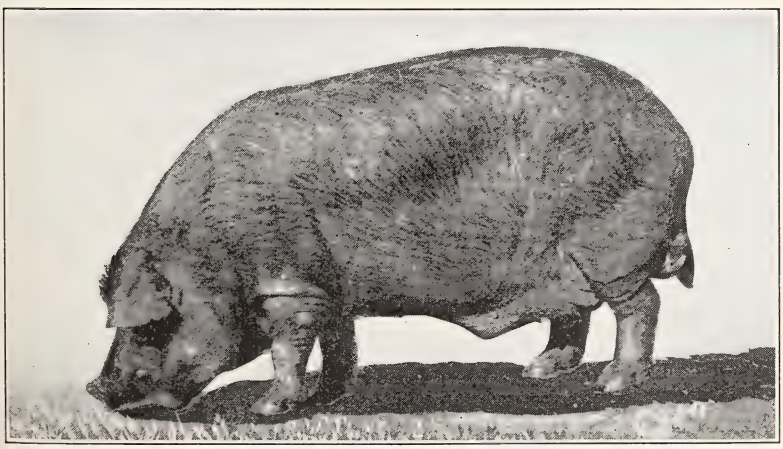

FIG. 19.—Boar (ungraded)

class and needs no explanation. Feeder and stocker are other subclasses already explained under cattle. In the case of hogs, the feeder and stocker subclasses have been combined, because trade practice does not, as a rule, make their separation necessary.

After the subclasses, there is a divergence between the cattle and swine schedules. The third general subdivision of cattle is the age selection. This selection is used because, in cattle, age is frequently an important price-determining factor. In the case of hogs, this is not generally true, since, as has already been indicated, practically all hogs are marketed at such an early age that little or no attention is paid to that factor.

USE SELECTIONS OF HOGS

Instead of the age selection, in the case of hogs there is a second or special use selection. Some of the slaughtered hogs go into certain special uses, whereas others are put to still different uses. Hence there is a group of slaughter hogs which is known as butcher hogs, another group known as bacon hogs and still another known as packing hogs. These terms are more or less supplementary and merely indicate a special adaptability for certain specialized uses.

Although there are really three use selections—butcher, bacon, and packing—in the accompanying schedule butcher and bacon hogs have been combined in a single use selection, because they usually sell together on the market and final segregation is made in the packing house.

Up to the present time three main types of hogs (see figs. 11 to 16) have been produced in this country: The lard-type hog, the bacon-type hog, and what may be called for the want of a better name the intermediate or mean-type hog. The lard-type hog is usually a blocky, stockily built, close-coupled animal, capable of taking on a large amount of fat. The bacon-type hog is longer, more rangy, and carries only a moderate amount of fat in proportion to lean. The intermediate or mean-type hog is a sort of compromise between the two.

Largely because of our ability to produce great quantities of corn at comparatively low costs, the lard-type hog, up to the present time, has been the type most in favor with American swine producers. In spite of the fact that great quantities of bacon are produced annually for both domestic and foreign trade it has been generally recognized that the lard-type hog is not the ideal for producing the highest grade bacon. Slaughterers, however, have overcome many of the deficiencies of the lard-type hog from the standpoint of bacon production by slaughtering the animals at a comparatively early age and before they had attained excessive weight. This policy has fitted in well with general conditions prevailing in this country. It has permitted swine producers to feed great quantities of corn and thereby keep down production costs. It has maintained our reputation as the greatest lard producers in the world and at the same time has made it possible, by careful selection of lightweight hogs, to still produce a first quality bacon.

Recently there has been a tendency toward increased production of the mean-type hog. Still more recently considerable sentiment has developed in favor of producing a strictly bacon-type hog in

areas particularly suited to such animals, such as the great dairy districts where protein feeds are comparatively abundant. But there is not yet, in general market practice, enough segregation of butcher and bacon hogs to make it advisable to extend the schedule by dividing it into these two groups.

No arbitrary distinction is made between the various use selections in hogs. Bacon is frequently made from butcher hogs; bacon hogs are sometimes retailed over the butcher's block as fresh pork; and sometimes hogs of both types are packed. The whole matter is merely one of exceptional suitability for a certain use; and in the following definitions an effort has been made to point out the more important characteristics which render certain types of hogs especially suitable for such specialized uses.

Butcher hogs as a group are hogs which produce carcasses and cuts of such size and quality as to be suitable for retailing as fresh meat. As a rule, they range from 6 to 8 months of age. Usual weight ranges are from 160 to 250 pounds, although many hogs fall in this group which are outside these limits. They carry moderate amounts of fat in proportion to lean.

Bacon hogs are hogs which, because of a comparatively low ratio of fat to lean, produce bacon sides which appeal strongly to the more discriminating bacon trade. Bodies of such hogs are longer in proportion to their depth than is true of other types, which makes possible a longer side of bacon without increasing its breadth or thickness. Grade for grade, the quality of both the flesh and fat of bacon hogs is fully equal to that of butcher hogs and usually superior to that of packing hogs.

Packing hogs, strictly speaking, are hogs which produce pork best suited for packing or curing as barreled pork. The term "packing" is not very accurate, for very little barreled pork is now made. Most of the so-called packing hogs are converted into lard and into heavy, coarse, cured cuts, which are sold to an undiscriminating trade. Many heavy sides from such hogs are cured in dry salt, and the hams are extensively used as boneless, boiled hams, and for similar purposes. In general, packing hogs now are a by-product of the swine industry. Most of them are sows which have raised several litters of pigs and as a result, have attained too much size, age, weight, and coarseness to meet the requirements of either butcher or bacon hogs.

A limited number of barrow hogs are included in this group which, because of poor breeding or because they have been held too long, have become excessively heavy and coarse, are not suitable for butcher or bacon trade, and therefore fall into the packing hog group.

WEIGHT SELECTIONS OF HOGS

The next important segregation of hogs is on the basis of weight. The general name applied to the results of such segregation is weight selection, with special names for each weight group. These groups are wholly comparable with those bearing the same names already defined in connection with cattle, although, of course, weight limits vary with the kind and class of animals considered.

In the case of hogs, weight is perhaps more important than in any other kind of livestock with the possible exception of vealers.

There are several reasons for this. Swine husbandry has developed to such a point that there is much greater uniformity in hogs than in either cattle or sheep. Furthermore, practically all market hogs are slaughtered at a comparatively early age, consequently the various factors which in aged animals bring about important changes in the tissues and body structure do not have time to function as they do in the case of cattle.

In view of this narrow age limit within which hogs are slaughtered, weight becomes virtually an all-important factor in determining relative desirability. This is demonstrated by the fact that when a packer places an order for hogs to be purchased at some distant market, in many instances the only specifications laid down pertain to weight and price, for experience has shown the packer that he can be practically certain to get the kind of hogs he wants provided they fall within certain weight limitations. It will be noted that the limits of the various weight groups vary somewhat between use selections. Packing hogs are usually heavier than butcher and bacon hogs.

GRADES OF HOGS

Grades of hogs are based on the same three fundamental characteristics—conformation, finish, and quality—already described under cattle. Different animals possess these characteristics in varying degrees and the result obtained by combining these characteristics determines the grade into which the animal falls. As was true of cattle, the number of grades varies with the weight selection, use selection, subclass and class considered. To illustrate, it is almost impossible for a hog weighing under 160 pounds to possess sufficient finish to be graded prime. Such a hog usually lacks maturity and has been too busy growing to put on much finish.

Following the same line of reasoning, cull, and in some instances common grades, are omitted from certain groups, because it is practically impossible to produce a hog that meets the other requirements of the group which is, at the same time, so deficient in conformation, finish, and quality that it would be graded as cull or common.

To illustrate: A barrow or gilt suitable for slaughter, of such type as to make it acceptable as either a butcher or bacon hog, and weighing from 200 to 250 pounds, which would put it in the medium-weight selection, could not be so deficient in conformation, finish, and quality that it would grade below common. In the case of boars, no grades have been listed, because this class is numerically unimportant and trade in such animals is extremely limited. Competition usually is slight and they are generally sold at a flat price per pound without grading.

PIGS

A *pig* is a member of the swine family which has not attained sufficient age or maturity to make reproduction possible.

Pigs in reality constitute an age or weight selection, age and weight in pigs being, as a rule, so closely related that specifying the weight of an animal usually indicates its approximate age and vice versa. However, as with vealers and lambs so in swine, these

younger animals are handled separately and form a more or less distinct group of considerable economic importance.

For practical market-reporting purposes and for purposes of this schedule all animals of the swine family which weigh under 130 pounds, and which do not naturally fall into one of the other classes have been considered as pigs.

Pig schedule

Class	Subclass	Use selection	Weight selection	Grade
Pigs	Slaughter	Roaster	Lightweight—20 pounds down	----------
			Mediumweight—20 to 30 pounds	----------
			Heavyweight—30 pounds up	----------
			Lightweight—100 pounds down	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—100 to 115 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—115 to 130 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
	Feeder and stocker.		Lightweight—70 pounds down	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—70 to 100 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—100 to 130 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.

SUBDIVISIONS OF PIG SCHEDULE

Theoretically there should be at least three classes of pigs, for such animals may be male, female, or unsexed. Market demand discriminates sharply against boar pigs, and for that reason so few of them come to market that they are negligible. As between female and castrated male pigs, buyers show practically no preference, for reasons already set forth in connection with vealers. Hence to divide pigs into classes on the basis of sex condition would materially extend the schedule without serving any useful purpose.

Like hogs, pigs are divided into three subclasses—slaughter, feeder, and stocker (figs. 20 and 21), the meaning of these terms being identical with that used in connection with hogs. Because all pigs are young and therefore relatively light in weight and generally lacking in finish they are not suited to as many special uses as are

hogs. Hence, in the case of pigs the use selection does not carry much significance.

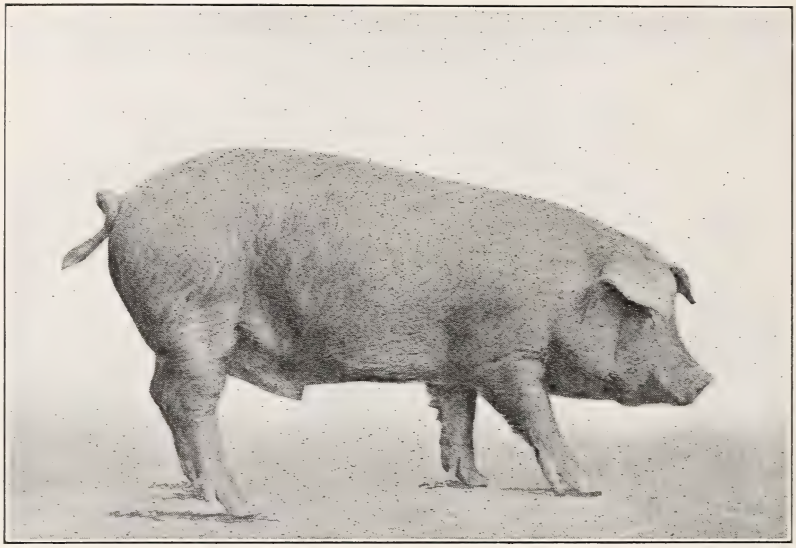

FIG. 20.—Slaughter pig (good grade)

Very young and lightweight pigs, however, are frequently put to the special use of roasting. A certain class of hotel and restaurant trade demands these young pigs and roasts them whole. For this purpose the pig should be fat and yet not weigh much over 40 pounds. As a rule weights range from 15 to 30 pounds.

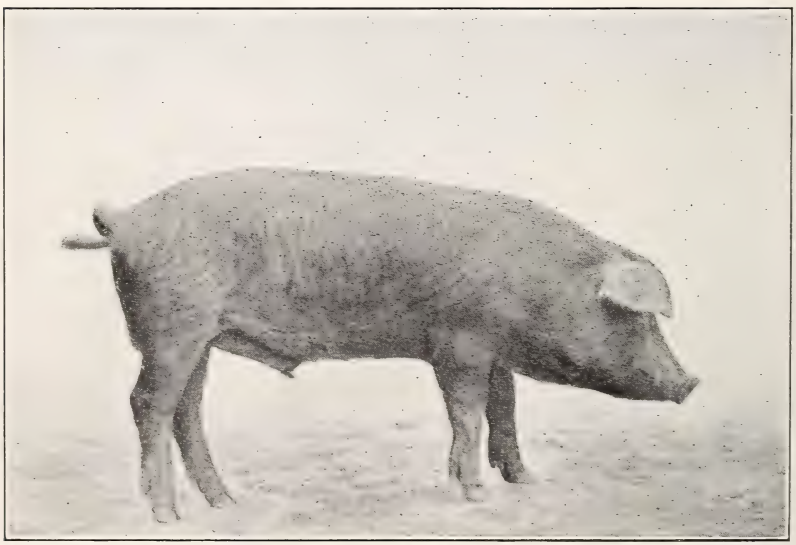

FIG. 21.—Feeder pig (good grade)

The weight selection in pigs is probably as important as in hogs. A certain class of trade requires lightweight cuts of fresh pork, which must be supplied by pigs of certain weight. In the feeder and stocker group buyers also discriminate sharply between different weights, such discrimination depending largely on the preference of individual feeders and on the kind and quantity of the feed available.

Grades of pigs are fairly comparable with those of hogs although it will be noted that prime grade is lacking and that cull or inferior grades appear in each weight group. This is what might be expected in view of the light weight and immaturity of pigs. No grades appear in roaster pigs since they are not usually sold on a graded basis. Weight is the price-determining factor in most instances.

SHEEP

Sheep are animals of the ovine species sufficiently mature to have acquired at least the first pair of permanent teeth. This usually occurs when the animal is between 10 and 15 months of age.

As a market commodity sheep are now relatively unimportant. At most markets sheep do not constitute more than 15 per cent of total receipts of ovine stock, and at times they amount to less than 10 per cent.

Sheep schedule

Class	Subclass	Age selection	Weight selection	Grade
Ewes	Slaughter	Yearling	Lightweight and handyweight—90 pounds down	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—90 to 100 pounds.	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—100 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
		2 years old and over.	Lightweight—100 pounds down	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Handyweight—100 to 120 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—120 to 140 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Heavyweight—140 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.

Sheep schedule—Continued

Class	Subclass	Age selection	Weight selection	Grade
Ewes	Feeder	All ages [1]	All weights [1]	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
	Breeder	Yearling	Lightweight—90 pounds down	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Mediumweight—90 to 100 pounds	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Heavyweight—100 pounds up	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		2 and 3 years old	Lightweight—100 pounds down	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Mediumweight—100 to 125 pounds	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Heavyweight—125 pounds up	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		4 years old	Lightweight—100 pounds down	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Mediumweight—100 to 125 pounds	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Heavyweight—125 pounds up	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		5 years old and over.	Lightweight—100 pounds down	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Mediumweight—100 to 125 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Heavyweight—125 pounds up	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium No. 3. Common or No. 4.

[1] See footnote 1, page 13.

Sheep schedule—Continued

Class	Subclass	Age selection	Weight selection	Grade
Wethers	Slaughter	Yearling	Lightweight—90 pounds down	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Handyweight—90 to 100 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—100 to 110 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Heavyweight—110 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		2 years old and over.	Lightweight—100 pounds down	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Handyweight—100 to 115pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Mediumweight—115 to 130 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Heavyweight—130 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
	Feeder	Yearling	All weights [1]	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		2 years old and over.	All weights [1]	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
Rams	Slaughter	Yearling	All weights [1]	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
		2 years old and over.	All weights [1]	Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.

[1] See footnote 1, page 13.

CLASSES OF SHEEP

Sheep are divided into three classes—ewes, wethers, and rams.

A *ewe* (figs. 22 and 25) is any female sheep.

A *wether* (fig. 23) is a male sheep which was castrated before it had reached sufficient maturity to make reproduction possible, and has developed characteristics peculiar to its class. As a rule castration is done before the animal is 6 weeks old.

A *ram* (fig. 24) is an uncastrated male sheep.

SUBDIVISIONS OF EWE CLASS

Ewes are divided into three subclasses—slaughter (see fig. 22), feeder, and breeder (see fig. 25). The terms slaughter and feeder have been defined elsewhere in connection with other classes of animals.

Breeder is a new subclass not used in the schedule in connection with other kinds and classes of livestock. The term is to be interpreted literally and is therefore self-explanatory. The stocker subclass was eliminated because very few ewes are sent back to the country from market for any but breeding or feeding purposes.

Slaughter ewes are divided into two age selections—yearling and 2 years old and over. The significance of these terms is apparent.

A yearling ewe is one which has acquired its first pair of permanent teeth but has not yet acquired the second pair. These first permanent teeth appear when the animal is anywhere from 10 to 15 months old. As a rule the second pair of teeth appears when the animal is about 2 years old, although there is some variation in this. In any event for most purposes, the animal is considered a yearling until its second pair of permanent teeth appears.

The 2-years-old-and-over age selection is self-explanatory. It includes ewes which have acquired at least four of their permanent teeth. Ordinarily the second pair of these teeth appears at about 24 months of age, but the time varies slightly under different circumstances.

The weight selections appearing in the schedule are largely self-explanatory. Only three weight selections are listed for slaughter yearling ewes as the lightweight and handyweight groups are combined. A comparison with the wether schedule will show that in the yearling group the various weight selections of ewes run slightly lighter than the corresponding groups of wethers. This is largely because at the same age the male is usually heavier than the female. In the 2-years-old-and-over group the opposite is true. In other words, the last three weight groups of ewes average somewhat heavier than the corresponding groups of wethers. This is largely because wethers are now seldom held beyond 2 years of age, whereas ewes, because of their usefulness for breeding purposes, are frequently held until they are 5 or 6 years old and sometimes longer.

The grade groups of slaughter ewes are for the most part self-explanatory. The number and names of grades included in the different groups vary somewhat according to the requirements of the age and weight selections involved. To illustrate: There is no Prime grade, lightweight, 2-years-old-and-over slaughter ewe, because a ewe of that age, weighing less than 100 pounds is likely to be too

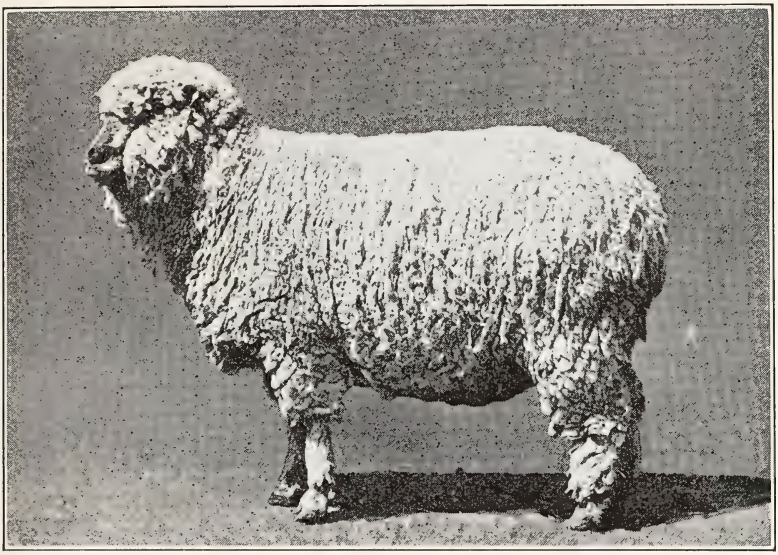

FIG. 22.—Slaughter ewe (choice grade)

FIG. 23.—Slaughter wether (choice grade)

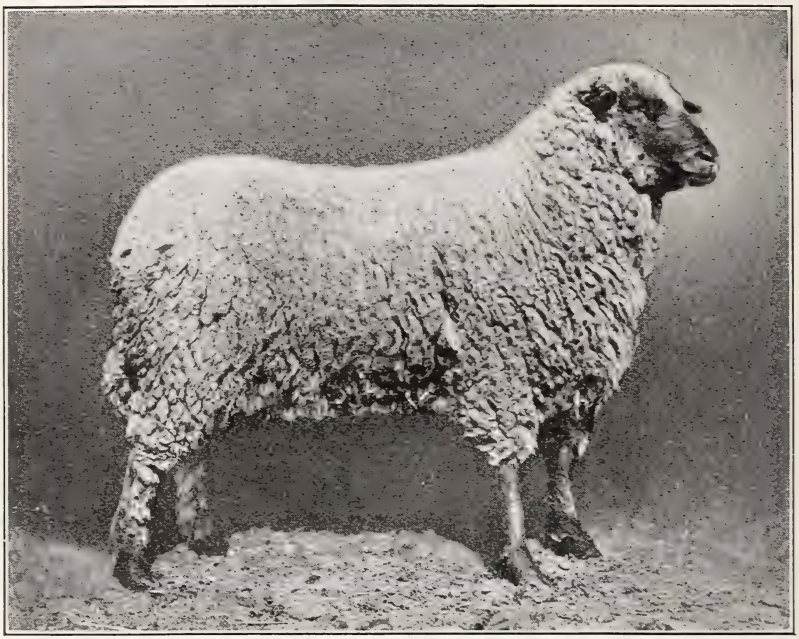

FIG. 24.—Slaughter ram (good grade)

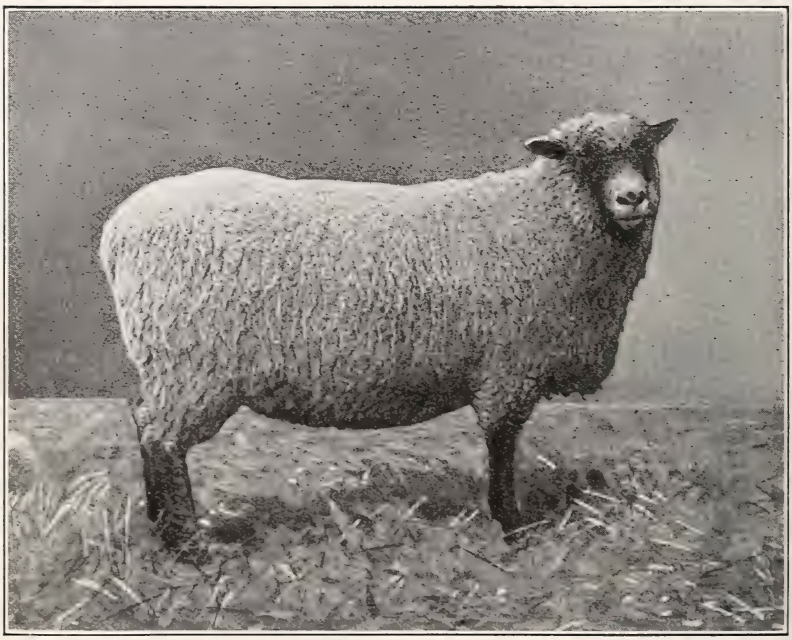

FIG. 25.—Breeder ewe (choice grade)

deficient in conformation, quality, or finish to be graded Prime. Similar considerations account for other variations in numbers and names of grades listed.

Feeder ewe subclass.—Compared with total market receipts of ovine stock, feeder ewes constitute a relatively small group. Excluding slaughter ewes, however, the feeder subclass is numerically one of the most important groups of the ewe class. However, trading in such animals is a comparatively simple matter, for the reason that feeder ewes are usually sold almost entirely on the basis of grade without particular reference to age or weight. Hence no extensive schedule for this market group is needed and no detailed discussion required.

Breeder ewe subclass.—Breeder ewes constitute a group of considerable economic importance. In this group age is a prime consideration in determining values. With certain qualifications, a young ewe is more valuable for breeding purposes than an older one, because of the longer life of usefulness which the young ewe has before her. Because of such considerations a rather extended list of age selections appears under the breeder ewe subclass.

The names of the various age selections need no explanation, but some question might arise as to why 2 and 3-year-old ewes are bunched in a single group.

In market practice 2 and 3-year-old ewes generally sell on practically the same basis. Buyers, as a rule, make practically no distinction between them either in the matter of preference or price. This is not true of ewes that are either older or younger. Weight limits and grades appearing in the breeder ewe schedule are based on market practice and experience. Fancy is substituted for prime as the name of the top grade, for the same reasons which prompted similar substitution in the case of feeder and stocker animals of all kinds. No grade below common is listed under breeder ewes, because an animal so deficient in conformation, quality, or finish that it must be graded lower than common would not ordinarily be purchased for breeding purposes but would, as a rule, go for slaughter.

SUBDIVISIONS OF WETHER CLASS

With the exception of rams, wethers now constitute the least important group of ovine animals, comprising on an average probably not more than 3 per cent of receipts at most markets. Even on the larger markets many days occur during the year when no wethers are offered.

Wethers are divided into two subclasses—slaughter and feeder—definitions of which terms have already been given in connection with other classes of animals.

Slaughter and feeder wethers are each divided into two age selections—yearlings and 2 years old and over. The meaning of these group names is apparent and the method of determining age the same as in ewes.

Weight is a matter of considerable importance in wethers, chiefly because the consuming public makes rather fine distinctions between cuts of varying size and weight. The four weight groups appearing under each age selection of slaughter wethers are self-explanatory. The same thing is true of the grades into which each weight group is divided.

SUBDIVISIONS OF RAM CLASS

At central markets, rams constitute a numerically unimportant class. Practically all of them that reach market are sent to slaughter, hence only one subclass is listed. Slaughter rams are usually segregated into two age selections—yearlings and 2 years old and over. As weight is of little significance, no weight selections are shown. The number of grades of slaughter rams is limited to three—good, medium, and common.

LAMBS

A *lamb* is a young animal of the ovine species which has not yet acquired its first pair of permanent teeth. When the animal approaches the yearling stage, it is sometimes necessary to inspect the mouth to determine whether it is still a lamb. If it has not yet acquired its first permanent teeth it is considered a lamb.

Lambs constitute by far the most important market class of ovine animals, comprising from 85 to 93 per cent of receipts at most markets. Here again, however, the principle of basing class on sex condition is not consistently maintained in that lambs are considered a class without respect to sex condition.

Lambs really constitute an age selection rather than a class. As has already been pointed out, in immature animals sex condition has not had time to exert an important influence on conformation, finish, and quality; hence ewe, wether, and ram lambs are considered in a single group. Other things being equal, ewe and wether lambs usually show higher degrees of these three fundamental characteristics than ram lambs and for this reason there is a tendency on the part of slaughterers to discriminate against ram lambs. This tendency becomes more marked as the lamb increases in age. Feeder-lamb buyers discriminate against ram lambs regardless of the age of the animal.

Lamb schedule

Class	Subclass	Age selection	Weight selection	Grade
Lambs	Slaughter	Spring	All weights [1]	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
		Lamb	Lightweight— 70 pounds down	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Handyweight— 70 to 80 pounds	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4 Cull or No. 5.
			Mediumweight— 80 to 90 pound	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
			Heavyweight— 90 pounds up	Prime or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Cull or No. 5.
	Feeder	All ages [1]	Lightweight— 60 pounds down	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4. Inferior or No. 5.
			Mediumweight— 60 to 70 pounds	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
			Heavyweight— 70 pounds up	Fancy or No. A1. Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3. Common or No. 4.
	Shearer	All ages [1]	Lightweight— 70 pounds down	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3.
			Mediumweight— 70 to 80 pounds	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3.
			Heavyweight— 80 pounds up	Choice or No. 1. Good or No. 2. Medium or No. 3

[1] See footnote 1, page 13.

SUBDIVISIONS OF LAMB SCHEDULE

Lambs are divided into three subclasses—slaughter, feeder, and shearer. Slaughter and feeder subclasses have already been defined in connection with other species. Shearer is a subclass peculiar to the ovine species.

Shearer lambs.—This subclass comprises a group of animals similar to feeder lambs. As a rule they are somewhat deficient in finish, but average higher in this respect than feeder lambs. In fact, slaughterers and shearer-lamb buyers frequently compete for the same lambs. As the name implies, the chief object in buying them is to return them to the country, shear them, and later bring them back to market. Hence shearer lambs usually carry a reasonably heavy fleece. Occasionally the lamb is fed long enough to raise it one or more steps in the grade schedule before it is returned for slaughter.

During the late winter or early spring, at the larger public markets some lambs are always purchased as shearer lambs; but the practice is most prevalent when wool is relatively high and the trend of fat-lamb prices upward. It is based partly on the theory that the wool will bring a higher price if removed from the lamb than if it is sold to the slaughterer on the lamb's back, and partly on the expectation of a quick weight gain in the lamb and a higher market when it is returned for slaughter.

Slaughter lambs are divided into two age selections—spring and lamb.

Spring lamb.—The term "spring lamb" (see fig. 26) is not easily defined. Theoretically any lamb dropped late in the winter or early in the spring is a spring lamb and might be so considered until the close of the grass season the following fall. In market practice, however, the term is based on the time of birth combined with the time of marketing. Hence the term "spring lamb" is limited to lambs which are born during the winter or very early spring and which come to market between the middle of March and the first of July. As a rule these lambs are dropped sometime between January 1 and April 1. They are marketed when 3 to 5 months old and usually weigh between 55 and 70 pounds. The first of them usually come to market shortly before Easter and are in the nature of a delicacy.[5]

Lamb.—The chief reason for giving spring lambs a special designation is to distinguish them from the more mature lambs, (see fig. 27) which were born approximately a year earlier and which, as a rule, have been carried through the winter in feed lots. By the end of June most of the latter have attained the age and maturity which make them yearlings. Thereafter they are known as yearling sheep, and the spring lamb, in the meantime, has taken on additional weight and maturity and at the same time, in market parlance, has acquired the new label "lamb." From that time until nearly a year later what was formerly called a spring lamb is known as a lamb. In other words, the spring lamb drops his more youthful appellation at about the same time that his predecessor of a year earlier ceases to be a lamb and becomes a yearling.

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[5] *Hothouse lamb.*—Although a market commodity of some economic importance in certain sections of the country, hothouse lambs rarely reach centralized livestock markets. Such lambs are usually dropped in the late fall or early winter. Both ewe and lamb are given special attention in the matter of feed, housing, and handling in general, with a view to forcing the lamb's growth to the utmost. Such lambs are usually marketed before they are 3 months old and ordinarily are home-dressed with pelt on. They go to market throughout the winter from the Christmas holiday season to Easter and constitute a delicacy of the highest order. Most hothouse lambs are disposed of through hotel supply or commission houses and usually go to the larger hotels and high-class restaurants.

FIG. 26.—Slaughter spring lamb (good grade)

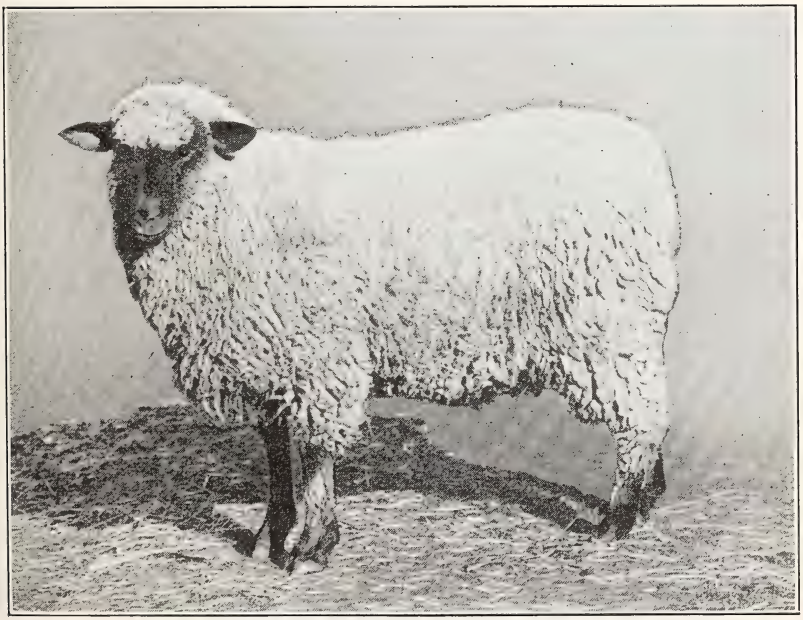

FIG. 27.—Slaughter fed lamb (choice grade)

WEIGHT SELECTIONS OF LAMBS

The weight selections in the schedule are self-explanatory. They constitute an effort to follow trade preference and practice. Spring lambs are not segregated according to weight, chiefly because the possible weight range of such lambs is limited. Furthermore, in trade practice, they are bought and sold largely on the basis of grade without particular regard to weight.

GRADES OF LAMBS

Grade is an especially important price-determining factor in lambs. All lambs are comparatively young animals. Lamb production is widely scattered and covers practically the entire area of the United States. Hence they are bred and raised under a great variety of conditions. The results of this are apparent in the animals when they arrive at public markets. Receipts of lambs at such markets represent a wide range in degrees of conformation, finish, and quality. To cover this a rather extended grade schedule is required.

Shearer lambs represent the narrowest range of conformation, finish, and quality, and hence include the smallest number of grades. In this special subclass only three grades are included—medium, good, and choice. This is another response to trade practice. Lambs grading below medium usually do not carry a fleece which appeals to a shearer lamb buyer. Furthermore, to finish such lambs would require a longer feeding period than the buyer would ordinarily care to assume. Also, they are not likely to possess sufficient quality to make economical weight gains. On the other hand the shearer does not buy a prime lamb, because the animal has practically reached the peak of excellence and further feeding would not be profitable.

SUMMARY

Many streams of livestock from practically all parts of the country flow into the great central markets. This livestock represents every range and extreme of kind, age, weight, conformation, finish, and quality.

A place and use must be found for everything offered, for all animals are sent to market to be converted into cash. Hence a large number of buyers must be assembled and their wants must be as varied as the livestock offered.

The function of the market, then, is to bring this great variety of animals and these varied wants together in such a way that exchanges may be made and one may satisfy the other. To accomplish this satisfactorily and economically the animals are sorted into groups on the basis of certain outstanding characteristics.

First they are sorted according to kind or species as cattle, hogs, and sheep. Each kind is then divided into classes, usually on the basis of sex condition as steers, cows, sows, ewes, and wethers.

The classes then are divided into subclasses according to relative suitability for certain general uses as slaughter, feeding, and breeding.

These subclasses are sometimes divided into various use selections, according to the relative suitability of the animals for certain special purposes, as bacon hogs, packing sows, etc.

In other instances each subclass is divided into two or more age selections as yearlings, 2-year-olds, etc.

Both age and use selections are usually subdivided into several weight selections as lightweight, mediumweight, and heavyweight.

And, finally, each weight selection includes and, as a rule, is divided into several grades. The basis of these grades is the degree of conformation, finish, and quality possessed by the animals.

This sorting of meat animals before sale accomplishes four major purposes. (1) It enables the buyer to get the animals he needs without buying some for which he has no use. (2) It makes possible an accurate determination of values. (3) It enables the producer to sell his livestock strictly on its merits. (4) It makes possible accurate and intelligible market reporting by providing a name or label for each group and having the meaning of such group names clearly understood by all interested parties.

ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

June 1, 1926

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